Other applications will soon become available from other sites, and the most current information will be available from the cdev web site, http://www.cebaf.gov/cdev.

Still Planned:

- a simple service for which you need only provide synchronous read and write routines. This will speed up integrating a simple synchronous RPC or memory image based system.

8. Planned Enhancements

There are many enhancements planned for cdev, and releases will probably come out every 3 months for a while. The following is a list of topics planned for summer of 1996. Work on all of these topics is underway.

1. Collection devices. Created dynamically or statically, each device would contain a list of other devices. Messages would be repeated to all contained devices, and read results would be collected together and returned to the caller as a vector. Implementation will support passing the list down to the service instead of iterating in the cdev layer so that list based services (such as SLAC's) can optimize performance.
2. Service + Server based upon passing cdevData objects between client and server. This allows complex query/reply type operations. A prototype is already in operation at CEBAF, although the protocol is likely to change somewhat.
3. Virtual device wrapper around the correlation measurement engine (see below).

The following list has been put on the back burner, but still of interest:

4. "Multiknob" devices. Write operations would be applied to a vector of devices with weighting factors which may be constant, or a simple functional form, or derived by a call to another process. Intended for tuning machines.
5. Indirect devices. The name of the actual device can be changed on the fly, and all connections to the old device will be automatically dropped and new connections established. Useful for changing generic displays from one device to another.
6. tcl devices. Devices implemented as tcl scripts, which may call other cdev devices (or anything else).
7. Connection to an object oriented database.

9. cdev Applications

The following applications are available as cdev extensions from CEBAF:

1. Correlation package, modeled after SLAC's correlation plot utility. Consists of a correlation engine class library plus an application (XACT) which uses it.
2. Multiknob utility (like #4 above, with a GUI interface). This is based upon a prototype of multiknob devices, and is configured by ascii files.

Finally, the following EPICS tools will be ported to cdev or re-written using cdev in the next 12 months (ports to be distributed with EPICS, not cdev, due to licensing constraints):

1. Alarm Handler (specialized GUI tool). Porting now underway at APS.
2. General operator interface (GUI), either dm or medm or both.
3. Archiver (new, to be distributed with cdev).
4. Save / Restore tool (ditto).

9. The cdev/examples directory now contains 2 additional example services, one implementing compound cdev devices, and the other (demoService) is a trivial service useful as a starting point for read/write services.

5. Problems and Restrictions (general)

Restrictions:

- cdev is not yet thread safe, and may not be safe against instantiating more that one cdevSystem object.

6. Channel Access Service Features and Restrictions

EPICS / Channel Access version 3.12 is recommended. The following comments from the 1.1 release still apply:

Major features:

- Supports synchronous and asynchronous send's.
- Fetches data in native type (type conversion done on client and not server).
- Provides a default name service so that if a device is not defined, then an EPICS channel access connection is attempted with the record name set equal to the device name, and the field name set equal to the attribute name.

Restrictions:

- Only supports set/get/monitorOn/monitorOff verbs and the pv and readonly service data tags. Support for arbitrary messages with default data has again been postponed.
- Discards all exception callbacks from channel access in this version.
- Channel access security is not supported in this release.
- sendCallback does not support the same timeout feature as send.
- channel access fails if send is called from within a callback function (either asynchronous methods are OK: sendNoBlock and sendCallback)

Compilation options:

- _CA_SYNC_CONN = perform connections synchronously, waiting up to 4 seconds.
- _CDEV_DEBUG = print verbose messages
- _EPICS_3_12 = if not defined, use 3.11 calls instead.

7. Customizing for a New System

To customize cdev for a new control system, a new cdev service must be written. Two services are provided with the release: caService for EPICS channel access, and skService, a skeleton service. The ca (channel access) service is a complex example of how to interact with a control system which supports asychronous I/O. The skeleton service simply shows the minimal interface a service must provide, and can be used as a starting point for building a new service. A third example is contained in the Service Developer's Guide, and is intermediate in complexity.

3. Installation

Sources are available in compressed tar format, and contain makefiles to build the libraries and utilities. These have been tested on the HP, SunOS, and SGI platforms to execute correctly, and SLAC has ported this version to VAX/VMS. Fixes have also been incorporated from an earlier port to IBM/AIX (at CERN). As configured, cdev will build support for the EPICS channel access service.

The Makefiles have been extensively reworked since the 1.1 release, and should build successfully on more platforms.

For further information, see the README file in the topmost directory, and the *cdev Administrator's Guide* in the /doc sub-directory.

Support for site specific control systems must be added by the implementer. See the *Service Developer's Guide* for help in getting started interfacing cdev to a new control system. In addition, there are a number of example services included with this release.

4. Changes from 1.1 Version

A number of changes have been made to make the source code compile correctly on a larger variety of compilers, including VAX C++ and g++. In addition, cdev now produces more error and warning messages through its error logging routines. The following is a list of the more visible feature changes:

1. The C binding is included in the release (previously released as an add-on to 1.1).
2. The device definitions (ddl file) may now be stored and loaded in a binary format, which is about 20 times faster to load compared to the ascii format. A new utility program, cddl, compiles the ddl from ascii to binary. At run-time, the file format of the ddl file is detected automatically so that either ascii or binary may be used.
3. Shared objects are now loaded from a subdirectory of the directory pointed to by CDEVSHOBJ, where the subdirectory name is the name of the version of cdev against which the application is running. This makes it possible to run different applications against different versions of cdev. If the subdirectory does not contain the needed object, it is loaded from CDEVSHOBJ as before.
4. cdevFdChangedCallback added to cdevSystem, allowing an application to be notified when file descriptors are opened or closed by cdev services.
5. cdevData now supports a cast to char* as well as operator= overloading.
6. cdevGroup now supports a deferred execution / re-execution mode: if a group is in this mode, operations are remembered but not executed. Saved operations may later be executed as a group, and re-executed without re-learning. Only asynchronous operations are remembered.
7. A few bugs in the channel access service have been fixed. Monitoring of status without monitoring value now works correctly.
8. The cdev/src directory now contains an extensions sub-directory. Extensions include the tcl interface, and the ACE (Adaptive Communication Environment) based client/server package used for building new cdev servers and services capable of passing entire cdevData objects over the network.

cdev 1.3 Release Notes

1. Overview

The cdev (control device) C++ library is designed to provide a standard application programming interface (API) to one or more underlying packages, typically control system interfaces. The implementation is in 2 layers: the uppermost layer is used directly by an application, and provides an abstraction of the underlying package as well as many general purpose features. The second layer (service layer) provides the interface to one or more underlying packages, and is implemented as loadable libraries.

cdev was initially developed at CEBAF with input from the EPICS collaboration, and is now available for anyone to take and use or improve. We welcome all comments, suggestions, bug reports, and (especially) bug fixes, including fixes for new platforms. There are many planned enhancements, and would welcome volunteers to contribute to this project. See below for a summary of new and planned features.

You may join a cdev discussion list by sending the message

subscribe cdev

to the address mailserv@cebaf.gov. (Send the message HELP to the same address for information on how to use the mail server.) The cdev web page is

http://www.cebaf.gov/cdev/

cdev 1.3 is the third publically released version of cdev.

2. Documentation

The documentation for cdev includes the following:

- *Introduction to cdev* -- this is an update of *The cdev User's Guide*, complete with more examples. It covers all the basics, and is the best place to start.
- *A cdev Tutorial* -- this document goes through how to use each of the classes in cdev, including all public methods; extensive examples are given.
- *cdev Reference Manual* -- documents each class in cdev in alphabetical order
- *cdev Administrator's Guide* -- this is for system administrators, and those intending to port cdev to new platforms
- *Service Developer's Guide* -- this documents a couple of additional classes needed to create a custom service, and goes through a lengthly example demoService.
- *cdev C Binding* -- documents the C wrapper routines for cdev

This documentation is also available on the web site.